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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9303
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2202
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 5670
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9270
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6850
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 4650
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2645
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000490

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP AND IO; PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/03/2019
TAGS: PGOV PREL PHUM BM
SUBJECT: REGIME DETAINED NLD MEMBERS PRIOR TO EXPECTED ASSK
VERDICT JULY 31; MOST NOW RELEASED

REF: RANGOON 482

Classified By: P/E Chief Jennifer Harhigh for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

Over 50 NLD Members Arrested July 30-31

¶1. (C) Burmese authorities detained 16 members of the National League for Democracy (NLD) in Rangoon and approximately 20 NLD members in both Magwe (central Burma) and Mandalay during the evening of July 30 and the morning of July 31 in anticipation of the then-scheduled verdict in the ASSK trial. Many were later released; authorities continue to hold two in Rangoon and two in Magwe. The NLD is seeking to confirm how many are still detained in Mandalay.

¶2. (C) NLD spokesman Nyan Win reported that some of those detained are members of the Tuesday Prayer Group, pro-democracy activists who used to visit Rangoon's Shwedagon Pagoda every Tuesday to pray for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners; others are regular participants in the vigils NLD Central Executive Committee member Win Tin has been leading outside Insein Prison during Aung San Suu Kyi's trial sessions.

Preemptive Arrests

¶3. (C) According to 88 Generation Students (88GS) activist Toe Kyaw Hlaing, who initially informed us of the arrests, authorities told those detained they were being arrested to prevent any disturbances related to the announcement of the verdict, then expected July 31. (Note: Per reftel, judges announced July 31 the verdict is postponed until August 11. End note.) Many of the detainees are allies of 88GS, Toe Kyaw Hlaing added. Nyan Win told us authorities first asked the activists to refrain from holding their trial vigil or participating in prayers. When they refused, police took them into custody.

DINGER